

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Historic Preservation Division

Noel Holcomb, Commissioner

W. Ray Luce, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
34 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 1600, Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Telephone (404) 656-2840 Fax (404) 651-8739 <http://www.gashpo.org>

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Helen Talley-McRae, 404-651-5268

helen.talley-mcrae@dnr.state.ga.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church and School Listed in National Register

ATLANTA (August 13, 2008) – The Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church and School, located at 232 Martin Avenue, Whigham, Grady County, was listed in the National Register on July 23, 2008. The Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center preservation planner prepared the nomination materials. The property owner supports the nomination.

In 1878 a small group of African Americans purchased land at the northwest edge of Whigham in Grady County and formed the Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation worshipped in a log church until it was destroyed by fire in 1920. That year, the current frame church was constructed. Ebenezer African Episcopal Methodist Church and School is significant in architecture because it is an excellent example of a small, wood-frame church, with asymmetrical architecture referencing the Gothic Revival style.

The Ebenezer School is significant in education because it served as the only school for African American children in the town of Whigham. The school, built adjacent to the church in circa 1930, served the African American children of Whigham until the town's schools were desegregated in the early 1970s.

-more-

The church and school are also significant in black ethnic heritage because, in addition to its role as a religious institution, Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church served the African American community in Whigham as an important social institution. Like many African American churches in Georgia and throughout the South, the Whigham church served as a center for social and charitable organizations and a focus for civic and political activity.

The National Register is the federal government's official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. According to Richard Cloues, deputy state historic preservation officer, listing in the National Register recognizes a property's significance and ensures that the property will be taken into account in the planning of federally funded or licensed projects. In addition, owners of income producing National Register properties may be eligible for rehabilitation tax incentives.

For more information on the National Register and other preservation programs, contact the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources at 404-656-2840 or visit our Web site at www.gashpo.org.

###